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BIOGRAPHY.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE REV. WM. BOYD, OF LAMINGTON IN THE STATE OF NEW-JERSEY.

THERE are few duties in the discharge of which a friend of pious worth can be more profitably engaged, than in that of endeavouring to keep in remembrance the characters and virtues of those great and good men, whom it has pleased God to take from this world to his immediate presence and enjoyment. Whilst it preserves their memories from unmerited oblivion, it extends the knowledge of their virtues: it exalts the grace of God by displaying its happy effects in their holy conversation: it often attracts the solemn attention of the wicked: and it always serves to guide the footsteps of those who desire to walk as becomes the gospel of Jesus Christ.

It is under a sense of the truth and importance of these observations, that the following sketch has been written of the late Rev. Wm. Boyd, of Lamington, Somerset county, State of New-Jersey.

Robert Boyd, the grand-father of the subject of this memoir, was a native of Scotland. During a persecution in that country he fled to Ireland, where John Boyd, the father of William, was born. After residing there for a considerable time, he removed, with all his family, to America and settled in Pennsylvania. John, probably his eldest son, was married to a young lady, a native of that State, and settled near the same place in Franklin county. In this place was born, A. D. 1758, William Boyd. He had three

brothers and some sisters, several of whom are still living in respectability and usefulness. He was deprived of his father when about fifteen years of age. But this loss was more than made up to him, by that grace which it pleased the Father of Mercies to manifest to his soul about the same time, in turning him from darkness unto light. Although his patrimony was small, he was by some means prepared for college; and his education was completed under the presidency of Dr. Witherspoon, at Princeton, in the year 1778. His uncommon zeal and perseverance in study appear to have proceeded from a strong desire, which he expressed very early in life, to enter into the sacred ministry. The first few years which passed, after he received his degree at college, he spent in teaching an academy in the city or vicinity of Annapolis, and in a private family near Baltimore. Whilst employed in the capacity of private tutor, he studied divinity under the care of Dr. Allison of Baltimore. He was soon after licensed to preach the gospel by the presbytery of Carlisle, under the direction of which he continued till he entered that of New Brunswick. He remained for some time unsettled, preaching as Providence directed, in the States of Pennsylvania, New-Jersey and New-York; and his first ministrations were both popular and successful. Invitations and proposals to settle crowded upon him from different places. His talents could easily have procured for him one of the most conspicuous vacancies in our country: but, as he informed the writer of this memoir, he chose a more humble and less public station. Young and inexperienced, our cities, filled with dissipation and temptations of various kinds, would, he feared, draw him aside from that life of piety, and that plain, pointed, apostolic mode of preaching, which appeared to him so supremely excellent and necessary. So early was his dislike formed to that smooth, temporizing spirit which is too apt to insinuate itself into the pulpit; and to which young preachers are peculiarly exposed, before they are seasoned and confirmed in grace, and when the sentiments of society in general, the pride of the human heart, the vice and the caprice of a populous city, are all to be encountered. For these reasons Mr. Boyd determined on a retired situation, where he might execute his purpose of faithfully preaching the gospel, with less interruption and difficulty. He accordingly accepted the call that he received from the congregation of Lamington, where he had employed some of his itinerating labours. Soon

after his settlement in that congregation, in the year 1784, he was married to a daughter of Col. Taylor, who lived not far from the place of his residence. She proved to be a woman of much real worth, and completely calculated to make him happy. Whilst her piety and vivacity tended to cheer and enliven him in his dullest hours, when oppressed with disease or exhausted by labour, her industry and discretion contributed much to their worldly prosperity, and to the regularity and success of their various concerns. Happy in his pastoral and family relations, he devoted himself with zeal and constancy to the duties of his charge. Of a humble and domestic disposition, he seldom entered into the world but when called by the voice of duty. He delighted in the society of his wife and children, and devoted himself much to perusing carefully and repeatedly the books to which he had access in his retired circumstances.

As a preacher of the gospel he was peculiarly excellent. Himself deeply penetrated with a sense of the total depravity of the human heart, of its inability to perform any thing acceptable to God without his gracious assistance, he endeavoured to impress these great and fundamental truths upon every heart. His principal objects were, to demonstrate the necessity of a divine atonement and of faith in the Redeemer, in order to justification: to exalt and establish the grace of God upon the ruins of human pride and greatness: to pour the consolations and encouragements of the gospel into the humble and contrite heart: to expose the labyrinths of hypocrisy, and the dangers of self-deception: to awe or allure the wicked from those fatal refuges to which they often have recourse: in a word, to promote the glory of God, by the conversion of sinners and the edification of saints. His talents were *good* and his acquirements *very considerable*. He was remarkable for quickness of apprehension, strength of memory, depth of penetration and soundness of judgment. These had all been improved and cultivated by early, habitual and continued application. Hence it is easy to account for his extensive and accurate information, though much secluded from the world. He had studied human nature too, in its hidden springs and secret windings. Few men of the present age have acquired a more clear and extensive knowledge of the sacred scriptures, particularly of the New Testament. He possessed a mind happily formed for historical and theological studies, for polite learning

and profound investigation. In all the branches of science he had made considerable acquirements. He was an excellent classical scholar. He was thoroughly instructed and confirmed in the calvinistic doctrines. He was not ostentatious, but always sensible and pertinent in his pulpit discourses. Besides solid instructions, pathetic remonstrances and affectionate invitations, his sermons contained much matter that was original, the result of deep reflection. His views of divine subjects were often much expanded and highly elevated. But experimental, practical piety was the subject in which his soul most delighted, and which, therefore, was the frequent theme of his public addresses. Being *thoroughly furnished unto all good works, and from a child having known the scriptures*, he could use them aptly *for doctrine, for reproof, for correction and for instruction in righteousness.*

His style of preaching was in general simple and solemn, dignified and impressive. He was remarkable for a natural facility and perspicuity of expression. His ideas flowed freely and profusely. He spake of divine things with that simplicity which indicated his familiarity with them, and his sense of their infinite weight and importance. For a few years he adopted the custom of writing his sermons and committing them to memory; but for the remainder of his life he depended principally upon the vigour and promptness of his parts, upon the variety and extent of his intellectual resources, after he had studied and digested his subject. Method, natural and just, was so much at his command, that it seemed difficult for him to depart from system in his discourses. He appeared without the least effort to enter into the spirit of the gospel, and to illustrate and apply its truths. He was in general cool and deliberate, easy and graceful in his delivery. His eye lively and penetrating, his countenance grave and solemn, his person regular and handsome, his gestures natural and often striking, his voice sweet and commanding, all tended to give weight and impression to his words. But especially his holy example contributed much to enforce his doctrines. The delicate state of health, to which immoderate study for a few years after his settlement had reduced him, did not permit him often to indulge in that vehement address of which he was highly capable; and to which the importance of his subjects and the warmth of his feelings often impelled him. There were, however, occasions on which, passing the limits imposed by his debility, he displayed

that justness and grandeur of sentiment, that purity and elegance of language, that warmth and earnestness of manner, which are the essentials of true eloquence. He commonly spake as one having authority; his words could scarcely be resisted, carrying with them a kind of internal evidence that the speaker had been with God. But to the character and the fame of an orator he did not aspire. The flowers of rhetoric and the graces of expression, had little of his attention or concern. His supreme desire was to be a faithful servant and humble follower of the blessed Redeemer.

With such excellent natural endowments, with such a fund of acquired knowledge, with such an affectionate benevolent heart, and especially with such an active glowing piety, it would be natural to anticipate from him more than usual success in the service of Christ. But, as with many other wise and good men, his labours were attended with only a gradual and ordinary increase of the church of which he had the charge. It is reasonable, however, to expect that the seeds which he has scattered in the vineyard of God, will not be permitted to perish, but under the care and culture of the great Lord of the harvest, will yet be made to grow and bring forth fruit, to the praise of God's glorious grace and the salvation of immortal souls. And "if in the estimation of heaven, our services are appreciated, not by the good we accomplish, but the sincerity, the strength and constancy of our exertions," great indeed is his reward in heaven.

Mr. Boyd appears to have been formed not less for society than for the pulpit. As in the sacred desk, so in the social circle, his manners were always becoming. His carriage was agreeable and unaffected, his temper, naturally high, was reined in by reason and subdued by grace; his disposition was remarkably friendly and affectionate; he was sprightly and animated in conversation; he mingled condescension with dignity; he had a happy turn of accommodating himself to the tempers and circumstances of others, without sanctioning what was wrong; he abounded in anecdotes and historical narratives of families, of persons and events, a knowledge of which he had acquired in his extensive early reading, in his journeyings, and in his personal observations and intercourse among men. He could make himself agreeable and entertaining to persons in every rank and employment in life; and in the whole of his conversation there was discoverable such a vein of genuine piety as to make him equally agreeable to the se-

rious, and venerable to the wicked. He exercised the highest degree of prudence and moderation in all his deportment. He abstained in a great measure from those endless controversies which constantly divide the world, on the subjects of religion and politics. He possessed his opinions, and they were generally founded in reason and equity; but he displayed the soundest discretion by declaring them only when there was a prospect of doing good, or at least of not creating evil. He was a man of true and unfeigned humility. In the circle in which he moved he was the only one insensible of his worth and distinction. He knew so much of the glory and excellence of God, he realized so deeply and affectingly the vileness and vanity of man, that he thought himself the least of all saints. It is worthy of remark that he was a sincere and particular friend of youth. He seemed to be peculiarly concerned for their welfare. He used every means of encouraging the diffident, of stimulating the indolent, and of tempering the efforts of the ambitious. He affectionately took them by the hand, pressed them into his society, administered to them his counsels, and conversed with them most familiarly and impressively.

Following the law and example of our Lord, *Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye to them likewise*, Mr. Boyd was upright and liberal in his dealings: he was ever ready to forgive injuries and confer favours: he was incapable of wantonly aspersing the character of any man, even of an enemy. He had much firmness and independence of spirit, and at the same time much gentleness and condescension. He was really amiable in all the relative characters of social life, as a husband, a father, a friend; and his natural sweetness was rendered still more lovely and endearing by the charms of divine grace.

He delighted most, as we have already hinted, in abstraction from the world, and in secret communion with the Father of his spirit. Satisfied with his state, he courted not the smiles of the affluent and vain glorious. Humble and unambitious, he cultivated principally an intimacy with heaven, and a meetness for an inheritance among the saints in light.

But the lustre with which he shone could not be confined to that retired corner which he had chosen for his abode. The public became acquainted with his worth. He was reverenced and esteemed, by all who knew him, as *an Israelite indeed*. His opi-

nions were regarded in ecclesiastical courts and assemblies with attention and solemnity. He was elected a trustee of the college of New-Jersey a few years before his death, and continued in that capacity till his decease.

Our view of this excellent man becomes most interesting as we approach his final moments. Several times in the course of the last twenty years he had been alarmed with a great weakness in his breast, a small discharge of blood from the lungs, and a hectic cough. These consumptive symptoms scarcely ever totally disappeared. But with great prudence and management he retained the ability of attending to the duties of his office generally, until about the beginning of last March. He had been appointed by the presbytery of New-Brunswick to supply, at this time, in a neighbouring vacant congregation. The weather being cold and wet, the exposure was too great for his feeble constitution. On his return he was seized with an obstinate fever, the consumptive symptoms increased, and the disease became fixed. He continued in this weak and declining state till May, on the fifteenth day of which month it pleased God to take him from the world. As his complaint was of the lingering kind, it afforded an excellent opportunity of manifesting the power and glory of the religion of Jesus. And very seldom indeed are we presented with such a complete and happy christian triumph, as was beheld in this servant of the Lord. He had endured so many bodily pains in the course of life that he had learned to be patient. He had anticipated death so often, and conversed with it so familiarly, that its terrors did not alarm him. The inmate of his bosom had several years before been taken from his embrace. By industry and economy he had amply provided for the comfortable establishment in the world of his four surviving children. Although his attack was almost hopeless from the beginning, he was calm and resigned. He remarked soon after its commencement, "I have for many years felt this weakness growing upon me. I have a long time apprehended that I should fall a victim to it, and now the time is coming." Being asked whether if such were the appointment of God, he would be willing now to leave the world, he replied, "I have been examining myself and searching out the evidences of my being in a state of grace, and upon the whole I feel pretty well satisfied that I have really undergone a gracious change; and I am, therefore, willing to submit to God, knowing that

his own time and way are best." He enjoyed constantly, through his tedious and painful illness, a high degree of those cheering hopes with which a lively faith in the Redeemer inspires its possessor. His faith was well founded and would therefore bear the strictest scrutiny. He had "the testimony of his conscience, that not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God he had *had* his conversation in the world." His heaven commenced before his life was extinguished. His prospects brightened to the last. With his expiring breath he exclaimed *I am not afraid to die!*

Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!

RELIGIOUS AND MORAL ESSAYS.

ON THE MANNER OF PREACHING THE GOSPEL.

The external forms of religion, like modes of dress, seem to have been too often accommodated to the capricious taste of the world. This remark applies, with at least a measure of justice, even to the manner of preaching the gospel. The character of pulpit eloquence, in different periods of the church, has been extremely various. Scarcely an age has passed without witnessing revolutions in the style and method, as well as in the substance of pulpit discourses, effected by the various refinements of manners, the gradations of intellectual improvement, and the tides of popular opinion. In the first age of the church, the discourses of the apostolic fathers, like the character of the gospel they announced, were simple and unaffected. We see no displays of oratory, no attempts at the captivating address of a Roman or Grecian orator. It was Christ, and not themselves, they preached. Superstition, however, infused its debasing spirit into the writings of succeeding ages. Among these none partook more deeply of a pompous and fastidious spirit than the lectures and homilies of the fathers. We of course find little that is deserving of particular attention, till we come to the times of the reformation; and here we find almost every species of preaching successively becoming popular. But waving the consideration of this subject as connected with former ages, let us examine what is the character of pulpit eloquence in our times.

The extension of science and a taste for polite literature have, without doubt, shed many of their embellishments over the

discourses which we now hear from the pulpit; so that in correct arrangement, in elegance of diction, in splendour of imagery, in striking allusions, in all the captivating graces of oratory, we may venture to say, that the present preachers have far surpassed the down-right plainness and simplicity of their predecessors. Perhaps it would be no exaggeration to affirm that we have some preachers in the churches of the United States, who exhibit such specimens of a beautiful and attractive eloquence, that every man, of cultivated taste and devout feelings, might listen to their discourses with as much entertainment as he could have derived from any of the Stillingfleets, the Atterburys, the Sherlocks, the Porteuses or the Walkers, whose fame has been perpetuated for the glory of Great Britain.

But it becomes us notwithstanding to inquire, whether, in attaining this splendid elevation, we have not sacrificed some of the important requisites of an evangelical preacher? What would be our surprise and mortification, if the severity of apostolic criticism should pronounce us "as weighed in the balance and found wanting;" should declare that we had suffered the splendour and elevation of our style to triumph over the force and majesty of our thoughts; that excessive ornament had much obscured the simplicity of pious instruction; had converted a body of heavenly doctrine, simple and fervent, into a fantastic display of frigid morality and rhetorical embellishment; that, in a word, the plain and solid foundation laid by Christ and his apostles, had its superstructure too much decorated with the style of modern architecture?

With many, one principal object of preaching seems to be pretty well understood, which is to reach *the heart*, to inlist the feelings in the cause of religion. This has given indeed fire and animation enough to many public discourses. It has retrenched the prolixity of the first reformers; it has taught us to reject those dry and scholastic divisions, which in spite of the valuable mass of thought they contained, rendered the discourses of these great men tedious and uninteresting; and we have now adopted a method more forcible and perspicuous. But if it should appear that this anxiety to awaken the feelings has been so ardent and impatient in accomplishing its object, as to forget that the understanding is the medium of access to the heart, it must be admitted that it is still chargeable with a radical error. I cannot

express my thoughts upon this subject in better words than those of Dr. Blair, "*Conviction*, says he, is one avenue to the heart, and it is that which an orator should attempt first to gain; for no persuasion can be stable, which is not founded on conviction." The doctor has, however, given us a poor sample of these rules, in his own sermons. He has exhibited very beautiful, and often very accurate descriptions of the human character; but to a pious heart, hungering for the bread of life, his philosophic morality will afford but little nourishment.

All attempts, then, in the pulpit to call forth feeling without the aid of solid and sterling thought, clearly and judiciously separated and arranged, will either excite no feelings at all, or else those wild deliriums of passion, those hectics of the soul, which are too apt to absorb or exhaust all its rational feelings, and then quickly subside, and leave it so debilitated as to be incapable or indisposed to any active, vigorous and salutary operations. It is not sufficient merely to inquire whether a preacher has moved the feelings of his audience; since there are strong principles, which are often excited by eloquence destitute of religion. The human heart possesses a natural principle of enthusiasm, which dilates and catches fire from an infinite variety of causes. This operates always most powerfully when detached from the influence of reason. Indeed its movements are too rapid and wild for the cool and deliberate decisions of the judgment. When once excited, it silences reason, scorns all deliberation, and throws all the powers of the soul into tumult and uproar. When an orator can excite and direct this feeling, he is sure of producing most powerful and rapid changes in the heart: and some preachers may be observed to construct their discourses in such a manner as makes it too evident, that it is their object to excite this natural and ardent enthusiasm. The subjects they employ, and the treatment they give them, are manifestly calculated to excite and chafe the passions most intensely. The electrical fire, excited by such management, soon begins to sparkle and communicate to the soul, and presently all its elements thunder and lighten; but not a single solid evangelical emotion has mingled with this wild chaos of conflicting passions. The truth is, this is but the operation of some natural principle, some animal sympathy, or perhaps of some mental disease, in whose composition there appears no trace of the religion of Jesus. The doctrines of

the koran of Mahomet could be made the instruments of the same commotions. All the celebrated orators of Greece and Rome effected their political purposes by addresses to this same principle of the human constitution. It was after hearing a pathetic discourse upon the passion of the Saviour, that Crillon, an intrepid warrior, laying his hand upon his sword, and with martial fire in his eye, exclaimed, "Where wast thou, Crillon! where wast thou!" It was plain Crillon's soul was inflamed; but it is probable he did not then reflect, that the keenest agonies of his Redeemer might be produced by his own sins.

The whole system of divine truth contained in the scriptures ought to be displayed in its connexion and harmony. This system is a vast temple, in whose admirable structure the most minute part is necessary to the symmetry of the whole, as a single column cannot be removed without endangering the existence or destroying the beauty of a noble fabric. One of the most palpable errors of preaching, then, consists in unduly exhibiting some truths to the total exclusion of others. Some preachers dwell, from the beginning to the close of the year, upon the pleasures of devotion, or the fatal rocks of dissipation; or perhaps they involve in their discussions the whole circle of moral duties. These subjects they urge with all the eloquence and fire they possess. Upon these points they concentre all the powers of their genius, all the lights of philosophy and revelation, all the exertions of imagination and all the graces of a cultivated style. The consequence is such as might have been expected. Overpowered by such eloquence, the hearers appear to reform; they restrain their licentious passions; they smooth over the rough surfaces of their characters, until they fancy themselves "*rich and increased in goods, and to have need of nothing.*" But alas! the plague-sore of their hearts has never been probed to the bottom: and that bare-faced heresy, which explicitly exalts the powers of man, and denies the necessity of salvation by the merits of a Saviour, and of a change of the heart by divine power, is not so dangerous as this secret practical Arminianism, which spreads its unheeded influence through the whole system of its unhappy victim. The former is open and recognised, and its subjects may be convinced and converted. The latter is disguised under the appearance of truth and the semblance of sanctity, and is therefore apt to close the heart forever against all

... and evangelical piety. The laws of morality and the importance of the observance of seasons of devotion are, indeed, parts of a complete system; and if united with the rest are absolute truth; but when detached, they become absolute error. Let me then ask such preachers, although these are incorporated with the body of revelation, are not many of them the same doctrines that Plato, that Socrates, that Antoninus, that all the great moralists of antiquity preached long before you existed? Do you then preach any of the peculiar doctrines of Christ? The words of the christian poet should be written, if not upon every pulpit, certainly in the memory of every preacher of the gospel,

"How oft when Paul has served us with a text,
"Does Plato, Tully, Epictetus preach!"*

Let me repeat, what must have been the subject of every christian's observation, that it is only by preaching the grand fundamental doctrines of the atonement by the satisfaction of the Son of God, of the offers of divine mercy through him, of the original total corruption of the human heart, and of a radical change in the temper of the soul by the Spirit of God, in the use of the means of his grace, that the most powerful and lasting effects are produced in the religious opinions and feelings of men. These are the doctrines with which the first ministers of Christ conquered the world; these are the instruments with which the venerable reformers pulled down the superstition and dispersed the darkness of popery. *God in the person of Christ reconciling the world to himself*, is the epitome of religion, and ought therefore to be the the soul that should breath animation into every public discourse. This will give to preaching its zest; it will impart to it its light; and can alone be the instrument of breaking up the strong-holds of sin in the heart.

In a future number I may point out some of the causes that have operated to modify the characters of preachers at this day.

PRINCETONIENSIS.

REMARKS ON THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD.

THERE is probably no subject on which those who endeavour to live a life of faith will find more difficulties than the providence of God. Divine providence is a deep subject in itself, and it is

* Cowper.

often a dark subject, when viewed even in reference to events which relate to ourselves. Yet it is a subject with which the christian ought to be much conversant. To improve, indeed, in his acquaintance with the course of providence, to view the divine hand in all that befals him, and in all the occurrences that take place in the smaller, and in the larger divisions of society, is what distinguishes the improving christian. Now, when we have much to do with that which is often *dark and deep*, it is the less wonderful if we sometimes find ourselves at a plunge. But it is a skill which the experienced christian acquires, (frequently not without much sore trouble) to know what is *dark and deep*, in regard to *this* subject, and to treat it accordingly—that is, to let it alone, or leave it with God. He learns that there are many of his heavenly Father's dispensations which are presented to his view, for the purpose of being trials of his faith and trust; and which would not be the trials that they are and were intended to be, if they were not inscrutable. These he learns to refer to the sovereignty of God, with full confidence that they are ordered in infinite wisdom, goodness, and faithfulness, though he sees not how. He learns to consider divine providence principally as it relates *to practice and duty*, and to let *deep speculations* upon it alone. And doing this he is greatly comforted and much instructed by attending to it.—But, in fact, the difficulties attending the contemplation of providential dispensations, sometimes spring from the heart, and not from the understanding. It was probably said with truth to Job—"Behold thou hast instructed many, and thou hast strengthened the weak hands. Thy words have upholden him that was falling, and thou hast strengthened the feeble knees. *But now it is come unto thee, and thou faintest;* it toucheth thee and thou art troubled." In like manner, it is not improbable that Asaph could have solved the mystery of the divine dispensation, in giving prosperity to the wicked and afflictions to the pious, if he had not, at the time, been in an afflicted state himself. In short, the difficulty often lies, not in being unable to judge and determine rightly, but in bringing the heart to submit and acquiesce. Under deep affliction, indeed, the mind is often clouded and weakened, and cannot act as it would do in other circumstances; and frequently the fear, that the stroke is not inflicted in the faithfulness of fatherly correction, but in the displeasure of an angry judge, adds to the difficulty—On the whole, it is of

much importance for christians to get a just and proper understanding of God's providential dispensations, as well as of the real tenor and import of his promises, that in times of trial they may neither be bewildered and tempted by unseasonable and improper investigations, nor make unwarranted conclusions and inferences, nor adopt unlawful expedients to obtain relief. Yet, after all, there is much on this subject, as on almost every other, which nothing but experience will teach; and which nothing but the assistance of divine grace will enable us to practise, even after experience itself has taught us. Let us therefore learn our duty, and pray to be enabled to practise it. In the exercise of faith there is a short way of solving all mysteries of providence, —"Shall not the judge of all the earth do right"—"Even so Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight."

NOTICE OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

We are persuaded that the readers of our magazine will be gratified by the following extracts, from two sermons preached before the general assembly of the presbyterian church, at their sessions which have just closed—The first on 1 Cor. xiv. 12. was delivered by the Rev. Archibald Alexander, of Philadelphia, at the opening of the assembly—The second from Isaiah liii. 7. by the Rev. John B. Romeyn, of Albany, on the evening appointed annually for the missionary sermon—Both sermons have been printed, and we think that after reading the subjoined extracts, many readers will be desirous to see the discourses at large.

"Seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church." 1 Cor. xiv. 12.

The cessation of those miraculous gifts with which the christian church was endowed in the beginning, is an event of which there is no clear intimation in the new Testament, but there are several weighty reasons which may be assigned to account for it.

When the christian religion was fully established by the evidence of miracles, there was no longer any necessity for their continuance; for this evidence, having been once exhibited, must

ever remain sufficient, and by means of authentic testimony, may serve for the conviction of all succeeding generations.

The frequency and long continuance of miracles would destroy their effect, and in time they would cease to furnish any conclusive argument in favour of revelation; or rather would cease to be miracles; for if it was as common for men to rise from the dead as to be born, there would be nothing miraculous in the one event more than in the other.

But a third reason is, the abuse to which these spiritual gifts were subject. We might have supposed, that if any thing could have passed through the hands of men without being perverted, it would have been these supernatural endowments, which were given by the immediate operation of the Holy Spirit; but we learn from the sacred scriptures, especially from this epistle, that they were as much, and perhaps more, subject to abuse, than the talents possessed by nature or acquired by industry.

The Corinthian church was favoured with a rich variety of these gifts; but in the exercise of them their spiritual men fell into great disorder. Instead of using them for the edification of the church, according to their original destination, they seemed disposed to pervert them to the purposes of ambition and vain glory. They were more desirous of possessing these gifts than of excelling in charity; and courted rather such as distinguished and exalted the individual, than such as tended to the edification and comfort of the church of God.

The apostle expresses his sentiments fully on this subject, in this and the two succeeding chapters; and having corrected their errors, and reproved them for their abuses, he advises them, since they were ambitious of spiritual gifts, to seek to excel, or abound, (as the word should be translated) to the edifying of the church; that is, in those gifts which would enable them to be most useful in promoting the glory of God and the edification of the church.

Now, although the gifts to which the apostle refers have ceased, yet the exhortation in the text is as applicable to common as to supernatural endowments; for every qualification should be earnestly sought which tends to the edification of the church; and talents should be desired by the ministers of the gospel only with this view. I purpose, therefore, in this discourse, to consider, first, wherein the edification of the church consists; and secondly,

to mention some of those qualifications which will be most useful to the ministers of the gospel in promoting this object.

The word edification is borrowed from architecture, and literally signifies the progress of a building. This appears to be a favourite allusion with the apostle Paul, when speaking of the increase of the church; and the figure is very beautiful and comprehensive. The structure of an elegant building, especially of a magnificent temple, is among the highest efforts of human skill. It is a work which requires the aid of almost every art; and cannot be accomplished without the application of much wisdom and power.

The principal things, in the erection of an edifice, which deserve attention, are the foundation, the plan, the materials and the decoration.—The foundation is an essential thing. The most beautiful building may be brought to a speedy dissolution by a want of solidity in its basis; and it should not only be solid, but sufficiently extensive to receive the whole pile which is designed to be erected on it.

The plan of the work is also of primary importance. As a large house must consist of a variety of parts, and as a multitude of workmen must be employed, if every one should pursue his own plan, or if they should divide themselves into separate parties, and proceed without respect to an uniform plan, and without regarding the design and labours of one another, the consequence would be, that the different parts of the building would not only grow out of all just proportion, but might interfere with, and destroy one another; until at length, the whole edifice would fall into ruins, or stand an unshapely and useless pile, the derision of every spectator.

The materials of a building should be of good quality, and should be arranged in due order; every part occupying its own place, and not heaped promiscuously together. If an architect should build on a good foundation, fragile or perishable materials; if, for example, he should pile up "wood, hay or stubble," instead of employing solid mineral substances, he would deservedly suffer great loss of reputation in the estimation of all who might be acquainted with the fact; or, if a workman should put the weakest materials in the place of the strongest, or cement them together with untempered mortar, he would gain but little credit or emolument by his labour.

Finally, a building is incomplete until it have received its decorations, and is furnished with every thing necessary for the accommodation of its inhabitants, or for the performance of the service for which it was designed.

The application to the church of these ideas, which occur in contemplating the progress of a building, is so natural and obvious, that it would be tedious to run the parallel in detail. With only a general reference to these particulars, therefore, I will proceed to state, that the edification of the church consists in the maintenance and advancement of "truth, unity, purity and felicity." These four words include every thing which enters into the idea of the increase and perfection of the church.

I. Truth is the foundation on which the whole building rests. Take this away, and religion will be mere superstition; morality, a matter of convenience; and the most fervent devotion, enthusiasm.

Truth is the subject of knowledge. It is the object of faith, and furnishes the proper motives to all pious and benevolent affections. It delineates the path of duty, and shows us with certainty the kind and degree of happiness which is attainable. It is a clear and heavenly light, deprived of which the understanding would be as useless and inconvenient as the eyes without the natural light.

This, however, is a word of very extensive signification. It embraces the universe. Substances and qualities, facts and propositions, ideas and declarations, are all included under this comprehensive term. But we are not called to explore the whole circle of truths in the universe. This infinite object is only within the grasp of the divine intellect, which surveys, with one comprehensive view, all possible and actual existences. Our situation, with respect to truth, resembles our condition in relation to the light of the sun. Although infinite rays are scattered from this luminous orb, in all directions, yet we are only concerned with those which come near to us, and of these it is only a small portion which we have occasion to use; so the number of truths, which can be known by man, is comparatively small, and of attainable truths there are few which are absolutely necessary.

Of these some are discoverable by the light of nature; for, although I admit, that there are no *innate ideas*, properly speak-

ing, yet I maintain that there are some *first truths*, or *self-evident principles*, to which every rational mind assents, as soon as they are proposed. I believe, moreover, that there are such truths in morals, in which all men do as certainly agree as in any mathematical axioms; and which no man retaining his reason can by any art or effort disbelieve. These are the stock on which all others must be engrafted. If there were no such thing as the light of nature, or a discernment of some evident moral truths, a revelation might be addressed, with as much reason, to a brute as to a man. All argument, and every species of proof and illustration, would be to him useless on this subject. This, however, does not imply that all men do actually contemplate these truths, any more than they do those necessary truths which lie at the foundation of the science of *number* and *quantity;* nor does it imply that the knowledge of the Deity, which is so general in the world, is the result of reasoning or the discovery of natural light. The contrary of both these I believe to be the fact. Uncivilized men think of little beyond the immediate objects of their senses and appetites; and, as to such a process of reasoning, as that which proves the existence of God, they are as much strangers to it, as they are to the most abstruse demonstrations in mathematics. All that I maintain is, that there are some truths so evident, that all men are under the necessity of assenting to them, from the very constitution of their nature, as soon as they are distinctly proposed to the mind; and that there are others so obviously deducible from these, that the reasoning by which they are established produces conviction in every person who attends to it. Thus far does the light of nature go in all; and we ought not to disparage it, for it is as much the gift of God as inspiration itself.

Revelation proceeds upon the principle, that men do possess some knowledge of moral subjects, and a feeling of moral obligation. This is as much taken for granted, in every part of the scriptures, as that they are possessed of an instinctive desire of happiness and aversion to misery.

But if we were left to nature's light, dark and wretched would be our condition. Even if reason were cultivated, and we should deduce by logical inference every truth for which there are *data* in nature, our situation would not be mended. So far is it from being true, that the light of reason is sufficient, that the

more clearly this light shines, the more distinctly would man perceive that his situation was miserable, and as far as he could judge, hopeless.

The truths most important to the peace and salvation of men, are revealed only in the sacred scriptures. The plan of redemption is here gradually unfolded, from the first dawn of light in paradise, until the *Sun of righteousness* arose with all his splendour on a benighted world.

Christ himself is the truth. He has not only revealed the truth, but all the rays of this divine light are concentrated in him. From his face the divine glory beams forth with its brightest lustre. The wisdom, power, justice, purity, love and faithfulness of God are here clearly exhibited. In *his* actions and sufferings, the spirituality and extent of the law of God, and the nature and just deserts of sin are set forth in a stronger light than any words could represent them. So completely does the character of Jesus Christ as Mediator involve all important truth, that no dangerous error can be conceived which does not affect our views of his personal dignity or mediatorial work. This, therefore, is said to be "eternal life," or all that is necessary to obtain "*eternal life*," to "know the only true God and *Jesus Christ* whom he hath sent." To "*preach Jesus Christ and him crucified*," includes the whole range of doctrines taught by the apostle Paul. The aspect of every dispensation, of every institution, of every leading fact and principal prediction in the whole system of revelation, is turned toward the incarnate Son of God. In him is contained that mystery of godliness, which through eternity will be developing, for the instruction and entertainment of saints and angels.

In proportion as the doctrines which relate to Christ the Redeemer are understood, received and reduced to practice, does the edifice of the church stand firmly on its basis; and in proportion as these are extended and propagated, the glorious building is enlarged. The prophets and apostles who speak of the Messiah may, on that account, be called the foundation; but "Jesus Christ himself is the chief corner stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord."

Both in ancient and modern times, the assaults of the enemies of the church have been directed against this corner stone; and although the *gates of hell* have failed of success in their attempts

to shake this *rock* on which the church is built, yet as the malice of Satan is incapable of being extinguished or mitigated, we may expect renewed attacks, until the time of his confinement shall arrive. In our own times, infidelity has come in like a flood, and threatened to inundate the church with a horrible species of philosophical atheism. The torrent swelled high and raged with fearful impetuosity; but its violence has now abated, and the danger from this *source* appears to be in a good measure over. But the watchmen on the walls of Zion ought not to lie supinely down, or nod upon their posts, but should endeavour to observe the motions of the enemy so successfully, that they may be able to give seasonable warning of the kind of assault, which may next be expected.

From the signs of the times, I apprehend the danger to evangelical truth which will now arise will be from two opposite points: from what is called *rational christianity*, and *enthusiasm*.

Most of those speculative men, who were lately inclined to deism, will now fill the ranks of socinianism, or unitarianism, as they choose to denominate their religion. The errors of idolized reason are very dangerous, because they have for their abetters the learned and powerful of this world, and the influence of their example is very extensive.

These opinions, however, are not likely to spread very widely amongst the common people, as they divest religion of all its awful and interesting attributes; so that the more sincerely and fully any person becomes a convert to this system, the more indifferent he will become to all religion. But no religion will engage the attention of people generally, unless it be calculated to interest their feelings. It appears to me, therefore, that enthusiasm is likely to spread more extensive mischief among the unlearned, than any species of free-thinking. The passions excited by enthusiasm, it is true, are too violent to be lasting; but the evil produced is, nevertheless, often permanent. Enthusiasm and superstition have commonly been represented as the two extremes in religion; but to me it appears, that they are near akin, and succeed each other as cause and effect. The wild ebullitions of enthusiasm when they subside leave their subjects under the fatal influence of some absurd opinions which become the creed of a *new sect;* and almost invariably such superstitious customs are adopted as are effectual to shield them from every approach of truth. So that these errors

are often perpetuated for many generations, and at last only die with the extinction of the people who held them.

It is curious to observe how nearly extremes sometimes approach each other in their ultimate effects. No two things appear more opposite in their origin and operation than unitarianism and enthusiasm: the one proceeding from the pride of reason, the other from the exuberance of the imagination; the one renouncing all pretensions to divine assistance, the other professing to be guided by inspiration at every step: yet in this they agree, that they equally tend to discredit and set aside the authority of the scriptures of truth. The rationalist will not receive many of the doctrines of revelation, because they do not accord with his preconceived notions, which he calls the dictates of reason. The enthusiast will not submit to the authority of scripture, because he imagines that he is under the direction of a superior guide. The one makes his own reason the judge of what he will receive as true from the volume of revelation; the other determines every thing, whether it relate to opinion or practice, by the suggestions of his fancied inspiration.

On the errors which arise from both these quarters we should keep a watchful eye, and against them we should make a firm and faithful stand. On the one hand, we must unequivocally deny to *reason* the high office of deciding at her bar what doctrines of scripture are to be received and what not; and on the other, we must insist, that all opinions, pretensions, experiences and practices must be judged by the standard of the word of God.

"To the law and to the testimony" let us make our appeal against every species of error; "if they speak not according to these, it is because there is no light in them."

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The last important qualification [for preaching the gospel] which I shall mention, is *a spirit of prayer*. If the question were proposed, by what means shall Zion be raised from the dust and become the joy of the whole earth? I would answer, by prayer. This is not peculiar to ministers of the gospel, but they should abound and excel in this heavenly gift. Although our profession leads us to be much conversant with religious subjects, and to engage in many religious duties, yet there are no christians who are in more danger of suffering the lively flame of devotion to languish, and to sink down into a state of awful declension and deadness than the preachers of the gospel. What the state

of our intercourse with our God and Saviour is, what nearness of access to a throne of grace we enjoy from day to day, how much of a wrestling importunate spirit of prayer we possess, can be known only to God and our own consciences. But of this one thing we may be certain, that if we are deficient here, we are deficient every where else. If we have not confidence to speak to God as a father, how shall we deliver his messages to the people? The minister who approaches nearest to God in prayer, may be expected to be most successful in speaking to men; and perhaps one reason why many of us see our labours attended with so little fruit, is because we are so little in the habit of frequent, fervent, affectionate prayer. May God endue us all richly with those gifts and graces which will enable us effectually to promote the edification of the church!

And to his name shall be the glory. Amen.

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth.

Isaiah, lii. 7.

Such is the language of evangelic Isaiah, when filled with the Spirit, his eye darted into futurity, and saw at one glance the value and efficacy of a gospel ministry. The volume of time was before him, and as he unrolled its ample pages, he saw apostles, evangelists, prophets and teachers going forth in the strength of the Lord to proclaim the glad tidings of great joy. He saw pagan idols fall before them abandoned by their followers. He saw kingdoms and nations subdued to the faith, and the banner of the cross waving throughout the world. The wilderness blossomed as the rose; and the habitations of cruelty became the peaceable seats of righteousness. Hence he proclaims aloud the acceptable nature of that ministry by which such great things were effected. To them was committed the mystery hid for ages from the world: and though we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of man, yet our weakness does not and ought not to derogate from the incalculable preciousness, the infinite importance of the gospel we preach. Commissioned by Jehovah, we bring good tidings, publishing peace; good tidings of good, publishing salvation. We say unto Zion, thy God reigneth. As the heralds of our exalted Master, we thus proclaim his kingdom to the children of men; as his

ambassadors, we pray you in Christ's stead, accept of that peace and salvation, the privileges of this kingdom, which he has purchased with his blood and freely offers to wretched, rebel man. Imagination cannot conceive of a grander subject for proclamation; the grasping desires of our souls cannot call for more interesting, more comprehensive offers. We unfold to your view a kingdom which cannot be moved, which will forever flourish, when earthly kingdoms shall have perished in the wane of years, and the world itself be crumbled into ruins. We bring within your reach privileges, the enjoyment of which makes the wilderness an Eden, and will afford increasing, enlarging delight to man when time shall be no more. This kingdom and these privileges summarily explained, whilst they prove the value and efficacy of a gospel ministry, by which alone they are brought nigh unto men, will naturally require an application suitable to the object of our present meeting.

Zion's God is the Lord Jesus. He is Jehovah essentially considered, and as such his kingdom ruleth over universal nature. He directs the movements of the vast machine according to his own pleasure. Having made all things, he still upholds them by his power, and directs them to those ends for which his infinite wisdom designed them. He guides the planets in their orbs and affords the seasons in their courses. He grants rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling the hearts of his creatures with food and gladness. He withholds those blessings, occasioning famine, disease, sorrow. At his will the sky is darkened with clouds; we hear the thunder; we see the lightning; the earth is swept with a tempest; nature is convulsed. He speaks; the sun looks forth with joy; the tempest is over; nature is calmed. He holds the destiny of empires in his hands, and controls every event in the history of man. One, he raises up; another, he destroys. With him are the issues of life and death; the dispensations of prosperity and adversity. To him nothing is too little, because nothing is too great. He, therefore, superintends the lesser concerns of nature; he takes care of what is in the earth and what springs from it, as also of the ocean and its inhabitants; nay, the very dust which flies along the road is under his guidance. In short, he modifies, convulses, creates, destroys as he pleases. None can stay his hand or say unto him, What doest thou?

Though the Lord Jesus thus reigns over universal nature as Jehovah essentially considered, yet is he emphatically and pe-

culiarly king over Zion by appointment of the Father. Zion is his church, his chosen, so called from Mount Zion in Jerusalem on which the temple stood. There Jehovah Jesus the God of Israel appeared in visible glory between the cherubim, and there he answered the prayers of his people. This kingdom is the gospel dispensation, under which he, as Mediator, God manifest in the flesh, goes forth conquering and to conquer, making willing subjects in the day of his power. He erects it in the hearts of all those, who, called by his Spirit through his word, are translated from darkness into light. It will survive the ruins of time and flourish in eternity: for they, who are made subjects of grace on earth, shall triumph in glory in the heavens. It is not of this world, neither cometh it by observation, for it is a spiritual kingdom, over which Christ reigns to the exclusion of any visible head. To him it was given in the councils of eternity by the Father; and by his obedience, sufferings and death, it was purchased in the fulness of time. Yes, brethren, it was purchased by the blood of the Son of God! Amazing, inconceivably amazing price! Hear O heavens and be astonished O earth! to ransom a guilty world, the eternal God becomes an infant of days: the Lord of glory is covered with shame, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief: the Author of life expired on Calvary! but death had no power over him; the grave could not retain him. He liveth, and though he was dead yet is he alive for evermore. His enemies seemed victorious when he hung on the cross, and was buried in the earth. His friends gave up all for lost, and mourned a kingdom that was departed and a glory that was ended. When lo! the tidings arrive that he is risen; he hath burst the bands of death. Then Satan like lightning fell from heaven, and thrones, principalities, powers were spoiled. Jesus ascended on high. He led captivity captive. To his triumphant chariot wheels he bound those bitter foes of God and man, who had so long excited and fomented rebellion in the latter, against the former. He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, advanced as God and man, far above every name that is named, either in this world or in that which is to come, and constituted head over all things to his church, which he governs and defends by his word, his Spirit and his providence. This mediatorial kingdom of Christ does not differ in fact from the essential kingdom of Jehovah; for such is its nature that none but the true God can be its sovereign.* The

* Witsii exercit: in Symbol: p. 391.

administration of the affairs of universal nature is thus committed to the glorious, the adorable God-man, Jesus Christ. He is prince of the kings of the earth, who in their official capacity are bound to honour and obey him as their Lord and master.† He bends every event to the aggrandizement of his kingdom, causing the wrath of man to praise him, and restraining the remainder of wrath: taking the crafty in their wiles and baffling the schemes of earthly politicians. The Nebuchadnezzars, the Alexanders, the Cesars, the Bonapartes, those thunderbolts of war, though they mean not so, neither do their hearts think so, are merely the rods of his anger, the instruments of his pleasure, the promoters of his interest. He is the author of their greatness; and when his purposes are answered, he removes them out of the way with the utmost facility. To him every knee must bow; his praise every tongue must confess. Every power that puts itself in opposition to him shall be overturned, overturned, overturned, that he may reign from the rising to the setting sun, the glorious Redeemer of sinners. To Jesus, mediatorial King of Zion, the powers of darkness are made subservient by his power. Having triumphed over them openly at his ascension, he still triumphs over them, confounding their schemes and controlling their exertions. To his kingdom continual accessions of converted sinners are made; its splendours will increase with its years. From its lowest state it will ever rise to greater glory. All things will work together for its perfection; even the destruction of the universe, which will bury in its tomb all things human, will mature this kingdom, purify it of its dross and make it the perfection of beauty in the heavens.

After speaking of the schools of infidelity the author says—

How different the spirit which the Brainards, Elliotts and Schwartzes of christianity possess. They teach a system of religion which accords with facts, and approves itself to our understandings and consciences. They inculcate a pure morality, in which virtue and vice are accurately distinguished, and according to which the passions administer to reason and are governed by it. They unfold the true character of man, and his awful responsibility as a sinner. They exhibit a crucified, dying Saviour, as the great propitiation for sin, through whom we may have ever-

† In the second psalm, kings and judges are commanded to kiss the son.

lasting life. They look beyond time to eternity, and prepare dying mortals for leaving this world without fear, and entering on the next with the strongest hopes. Surprising are the changes they have been instrumental in effecting, in the tempers and habits of men. With the most ardent benevolence they have left the enjoyments of civilized life with its endearments, that they might publish to the heathen the truth as it is in Jesus. At the risk of their lives, with the greatest temporal inconvenience and hardship, they have by perseverance collected together in bodies the rovers of the wilderness, and introduced among them civilization with its blessings. To such men, to missionaries of the cross, christendom owes its vast superiority over pagan nations. Under God they have been the true fathers of a country, its greatest benefactors. Of them it may be said, in a christian sense, as an Athenian statesman* did over the bodies of his deceased fellow soldiers, "You are like to the divinities above us; you are no longer with us; you are known only by the benefits you have conferred."

By such men, in the present day, the doctrines of revelation are published among the heathen with the most flattering success. It is wonderful, it is delightful, to hear the triumphs of grace over the stupid Hottentot, the credulous simple Hindoo and other idolaters, through the instrumentality of Vanderkemp, Kicherer, Carey, with their fellow missionaries. The peace and salvation they proclaim, as they suit the wants, so they touch the hearts of their hearers, and excite in them the most ardent desires after the enjoyment of such blessings. The weapons of rebellion fall from their hands. Weeping they confess their sins, and with unutterable emotions of gratitude embrace a precious, precious Christ.

Such are the men whom we desire to send to the heathen on our borders, and the destitute christian settlements in different parts of our country. Both these descriptions of men need a gospel ministry; that ministry which publishes the unsearchable riches of Christ, and exhorts sinners to be reconciled to God, assuring them of pardon and acceptance through the blood of the cross.

Such a ministry, my hearers, you enjoy; and from your sense of its value and efficacy, as experienced by yourselves, you

* Pericles.

may judge of its necessity to others who do not enjoy it. Do you consider it a privilege to be permitted to go up to the house of the Lord for public worship? and does it gladden your hearts to hear the ministers of the altar proclaim to you, in God's name, peace and salvation? Does the presence of your pastors cheer you in distresses of body and mind? Are you, through their instrumentality, strengthened above the fears of death and enabled to rejoice in the hopes of everlasting life? Are they acceptable in your eyes and to your feelings as ambassadors of God, beseeching you in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God?

Think then, brethren, of the heathen who are afar off, estranged from the divine life, sunk in deplorable ignorance, and guilty of abominable vices. Reason cannot teach them whether sin with which conscience charges them, can be pardoned consistently with the divine perfections; and if it can, what that method is. They have confused ideas of the existence of the soul in a future state after death; but of the resurrection of the body they do not dream. Their heaven, like the elysium of ancient mythology, is a place of melancholy sameness, to which the active scenes of this life are far preferable.* Among them are no messengers of glad tidings; none who offer them peace and salvation; none who unfold to them life and immortality as brought to light in the gospel, save they who are sent from christian countries. When they sicken and die, who is there to administer to their spiritual wants, or to lead them to the good Shepherd who laid down his life for the sheep? Their state has been, on former occasions, pictured to your view once and again, in glowing colours and with powerful eloquence. It is awful; it is deplorable. They are without Christ, strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. Who then, in this christian assembly, can withhold his commiseration for them; who refuse his aid to ameliorate their condition? I am a man and cannot but feel whatever relates to a fellow man, was a sentiment once delivered by a pagan on the theatre at Rome, and received with bursts of applause by his auditors. May such a sentiment prevail in every heart at this time, and constrain you

* Such is the language Homer puts in the mouth of Achilles in elysium. Odyss: lib. xi.

to assist us in sending forth to the untutored Indian the messengers of the blessed gospel.

But are our efforts only to be directed to the heathen? Do they alone need our aid? From different parts of our country cries reach us in the language of the man of Macedonia, Come over and help us. They are the cries of your christian brethren, who once like you enjoyed the benefits of a gospel ministry, but in the course of providence have been deprived of them. They feel their wants the more sensibly, because they know from past experience the value of divine ordinances. Their case is painful; their necessities urgent. Removed from the fellowship of saints and the sound of the blessed gospel, what is left to protect them from the craft of Satan and from the delusions of this world? A tree planted in a fertile soil may flourish, whilst in a barren soil it will decay. So a christian among christians, and with the cultivation of the word preached, will grow in grace and every virtuous principle, whilst among those who know not God and his Christ, he is in danger of fearful declension, if not apostasy. If our destitute brethren, who solicit with earnestness our aid, do not degenerate into unbelief and open ungodliness, there is reason to apprehend they will be insnared into one or other of the thousand nets of error which the god of this world spreads to increase his kingdom. My hearers, they have a claim on you which you may not, cannot deny; to which you are bound to attend. They supplicate that aid of you, which your pious ancestors obtained, in the infancy of this city and country, from Europe. Your gold and your silver, fellow christians, as well as your bodies and souls, are consecrated to the Lord. These blessings of his providence, as well as ye yourselves, are no longer your own; they belong to your Master, and he requires you to give liberally of his good things for the promotion of his cause. No attempt in the primitive church ever failed for want of such aid, from those who professed to believe in Christ. The spirit of the gospel is a spirit of benevolence; it disdains contraction; it delights in expanding itself and communicating all the blessings it can bestow upon those who need them. If you feel its power, our object is gained and success will crown our endeavours, whilst your reward will be great. The voice of praise and thanksgiving from churches supplied by your liberality will ascend as a memorial before God.

MISCELLANY, ORIGINAL AND SELECTED.

HEATHEN ORACLES.

A succinct description of the oracles of antiquity, of the impostures they practised and of the overthrow they have experienced, it is presumed, will not be unacceptable to the general class of our readers and especially to youthful minds.

Oracles were established in different parts of the world, but the most celebrated were those of Jupiter Ammon in Egypt, of Trophonius in Bœotia, of the Branchidæ near Miletus, of the Molossi at Dodona, and above all the rest, the oracle of Apollo at Delphi. The priestess at Delphi was known by the name of Pythia, and the games celebrated at this city were called Pythian games. The conjecture is far from an improbable one, that these oracles were established in imitation of the Urim and Thummim from which the Hebrews received the responses of the great Jehovah.

The answers the oracles furnished were usually given from some secret recess or cavern; in opposition to which, we hear the Lord, saying "I have not spoken in secret from the beginning." Is. xlviii. 16. "I have not spoken in a dark place of the earth." Is. xlv. 19. It is a constant characteristic of evil, to "love darkness rather than light." Scarcely a single oracular response can be produced that is not expressed with such ambiguity and in terms so convertible to different events, that whatever the result of any action might prove, the reputation of the oracle would be preserved. By arts of this nature the fame of oracles was at length so exalted that heroes and their soldiers became unwilling to fight without previous consultation: when from these deceiving sources they were assured of victory, they entered the field with confidence and courage almost invincible. The bosoms of opposers were filled with dismay—for what mortal can control the decisions of fate.

From among the examples of obscure and uncertain answers, the following are selected.

"*Ibis, redibis nunquam per bella peribis.*"

By placing the comma before or after nunquam the sense is entirely changed. The English reader will in the subsequent translation immediately detect the artifice.

You shall go, you shall return, never by wars shall you perish.
You shall go, you shall return never, by wars shall you perish.

When Cresus, the Lydian, led forth his army against the Medes who were on the opposite banks of the river Halys, the Delphian oracle replied to the inquirers

"*Cræsus Halyn penetrans magnam pervertet opum vim.*"

Cresus passing the Halys shall ruin vast forces.

It is here left quite uncertain whether the army that should be ruined was to be his own or his opposer's!

Equal ambiguity is discovered in the well-known reply of the same oracle to Pyrrhus, king of Epirus,

"Aio te, Æacida, Romanos vincere posse."

I answer, Pyrrhus, the Romans can conquer.

In this sentence is visible a double ambiguity—It does not determine whether Pyrrhus shall conquer the Romans, or the Romans, Pyrrhus; nor does it clearly express the idea that the one shall be vanquished by the other at all. The party may be *able* to conquer and yet a treaty of peace, or the absence of inclination or skill may render power useless or ineffectual.

The language used by Apollyon, who from Apollo derives his name, when conversing with Eve in Eden is of the same deceitful character. "*Ye shall be as gods*," or as angels. They became such; not like holy angels, but like apostate ones. To the grace of the Lord Jesus the saints are indebted for the bruise the head of this serpent has received. His policy is baffled, for "when they rise from the dead," they shall be "as the angels *which are in heaven*." Mark xii. 25. Micah's false priest appears to have been as crafty as he was mean. "Go in peace," said he to the Danites, "*before the Lord is your way wherein ye go.*" The expression merely asserts the omniscience of God without any respect to his approbation or his frowns.

It is surprising with what dexterity of thought the infatuated adorers of oracles would correct the errors of the responses and even charge them upon their own want of discernment. Rutilianus asked one of these pretenders to inspiration what preceptors he should provide for his son. He was answered "*Let him have Pythagoras and Homer.*" Rutilianus explained the sentence, that

his son must study philosophy and rhetoric. The youth dying a few days after, Rutilianus was charged with having reposed confidence in a mistaken prophet, but he satisfied himself with answering, that the oracle manifestly predicted the death of his son by appointing Homer and Pythagoras, who were both dead, for his tutors.

Fontenelle, in a treatise written when he was a young man, and which, it is probable, his maturer years disapproved, has laboured to shew that oracles were not given out by demons, but invented and supported by the craft of the pagan priests. He nevertheless confesses that "it is possible that God has sometimes permitted the demons to animate idols," and that if so "God had his reasons for it, which are always worthy of profound veneration." That the priests employed their fraud and imposture cannot be doubted, but the proofs of the existence of an agency more deep and more malignant than human agency are forcible and numerous. It is indeed observed by Rollin that if ancient tradition were ever certain and consentaneous in any thing, it is so in this point; for all the fathers of the christian church and ecclesiastical writers of all ages maintain and attest that the devil was the author of idolatry in general and of oracles in particular! Prophets and dreamers, it is certain, were permitted of the Lord as one of the means of "proving" Israel. Deut. xiii. 3.

Of the causes which contributed to lessen the oracles in the public esteem, not their ceasing to answer *in verse* as some assert, but the profligacy of the priests and the frequent detection of the falsehood of their prophecies were the principal. Horace in his satires humorously ridicules the pomp and emptiness of the replies of oracles,

> O! Laertiade, quicquid dicam, *aut erit*, *aut non*
> Divinare etenim magnus mihi donat Apollo.
>
> Sat. II. 5. 59.

> Laertes' son! my utter'd thought
> Will be accomplished or WILL NOT
> For great Apollo me inspires.

Mr. Wakefield, in his Evidences of Christianity, adduces a ludicrous epigram of Lucilius,

To ask the Lybian god three champions came,
If each should conquer in the Olympic game;
To whom the god with due solemnity,
"A CERTAIN VICTORY awaits all three,
"If thou take care that none outstrip thy FEET,
"None thee in WRESTLING, thee in BOXING beat."

But though into disrepute, with a few, the oracles were brought, the interest of the priests and the credulity of the multitude forbade their falling into ruin.

It remained for the victorious arm of the Son of God to overthrow these seats of Satan. From the period of the Redeemer's birth they began to fall, and before the triumphant spread of his kingdom, they totally disappeared. After offering several hundred sacrifices, Augustus Cesar importuned Apollo to inform him who should reign after him. In three Greek lines the oracle answered, and from that time was silent—His answer was to this effect:

"An Hebrew boy that rules the blessed gods hath commanded me to leave this dwelling and depart to hell—from this time, "therefore, go silent from our altars." It is said that Augustus struck with the reply, on his return to Rome set up an altar in the Capitol with this inscription, "*the altar of the first-born of God.*"

The damsel possessed of the spirit of divination (or Python) who brought her masters much gain by her soothsaying, was by Paul relieved, "I command thee (said the apostle) in the name "of the Lord Jesus to come out of her, and he came out that "same hour." Acts xvi. 16—18.

Eusebius has collected from the writings of Porphyry, that arch-enemy of the gospel, several memorable oracles:

"Groan ye tripods, Apollo leaves you; he is forced to leave "you by a celestial light."

"Wretched man, said Apollo to one of his priests, interrogate "me no more concerning the holy father, nor his only son, nor "the spirit which is the soul of all things; it is this spirit that "chases me forever from these abodes."

The prince of darkness has attempted the establishment of similar imposture in almost every land where the gospel of

Christ has not been proclaimed, but the time is coming when he shall be *cast out*—The missionaries of Christ are increasing; they are passing into every region; in the name of God they set up their banners and the gates of hell are trembling.

Mr. Editor,

I send for insertion in your magazine some devout meditations of a young lady of this city, who died the last winter. They were written for no human eye but her own; and of course contain the very utterance of her heart. On her death bed she was desirous to commit the whole of them to the flames, lest the perusal of them by others might subject her to the suspicion of having written from some motive of pride or ostentation;—from which, indeed, she was more free than almost any other person whom the writer of this ever knew. She was prevailed on, however, not to burn her papers; and as the perusal of them has edified a number of her pious friends, so it is hoped that the appearance of some of them in the magazine, may still farther extend their beneficial influence. The most of them relate to seasons of unusual religious solemnity, and were written in haste. A very few and unimportant corrections have been all that it was thought proper to make; and it is believed that no reader of taste and piety will think that the compositions need a farther apology, than the knowledge of the circumstances here recited.

PHILO.

Philad. June, 1808.

No. I.—*On the Morning of a Communion Sabbath.*

The sacrament of the Lord's supper, instituted by our blessed Saviour himself, just before he made the great offering for sin, even the shedding of his own blood, is a seal of the covenant of grace, established by the almighty and unchangeable Jehovah with his creature man, through the mediation of his Son Christ Jesus. It represents all the benefits and blessings of this new and everlasting covenant, which are to be received by faith on our part, for the removal of our guilt in the sight of God, for the cleansing of our souls from pollution, and for the communication of all needful grace and strength, to enable us to persevere in the christian course, uniting our souls to the Lord Jesus and sealing them unto the day of redemption. We are to give ourselves away, sweetly, voluntarily, entirely and eternally, to God through

Christ, to obey his commands, to walk with him and to live to his glory.

This is the solemn transaction I am now again to renew; and O my soul! before thou makest an approach to that holy table in a public manner, to take the vows of God upon thee, canst thou in sincerity, appeal to that omniscient witness, who seeth in secret, before whom all the recesses of the heart are unveiled, and avouch him to be thy God? Solemn and awful is it, to enter into engagements with the Almighty. Yet, with a humble acceptance of his own most gracious terms, trusting solely to the righteousness of his adorable Son, and relying upon his grace and strength, I would most deliberately, most cordially, most thankfully, put my whole soul into his hands. I would take Him as my portion, Jesus as my Saviour, the Holy Ghost as my Sanctifier and Comforter.

I desire to walk in all his commands blamelessly; to seek the promotion of his glory, and to leave all my concerns to be disposed of according to his sovereign pleasure. And now, O thou almighty Being! by whose power alone I shall be able to stand, wilt thou condescend to accept of this dedication, and grant me some tokens of thy favour? Bind my soul unto thyself by the strongest and the tenderest ties. Keep me ever mindful of my own weakness and unworthiness, but enable me to trust in thy strength. Make me to know thy covenant well. Unfold to my view its precious promises. Guide me by thy counsels in the path of duty, and by thy Spirit into all truth; and in the darkest season, enable me to trust in thy name and stay myself upon my God; and when death shall approach, whether in a sudden or a more gradual manner, may the recollection of this transaction, and, if it be consistent with thy holy will, the consolations of thy blessed Spirit, disarm him of his terrors, and present him to my view as a messenger of peace. May I, with humble gratitude, bear a testimony to the truth and preciousness of thy religion; then sweetly close my eyes upon this transitory scene, to awake in the realms of perfect light and love. Amen. Even so, come Lord Jesus.

August 18, 1805.

No. II.—*Before going to the Table of the Lord.*

"I know, said the apostle, in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." I cannot doubt the power, the love,

the faithfulness of my almighty Saviour. Much of it have I seen displayed in his dealings towards me; neither can I doubt that I have been enabled to commit my soul, my immortal soul, into his hands. Yet Satan, that busy adversary, would much interrupt that peace which I should derive from this assurance. He intrudes doubts into my mind with regard to those truths on which my salvation depends. But I know that all power in heaven and on earth is given to my Redeemer, and he hath promised that his people shall not be tempted above what they are able to bear; that his power shall rest upon them. O I do see that I am nothing, that I can do nothing, that I every moment need his assistance. May this humble me, and bring me to an entire distrust of myself, and dependence upon his blessed Spirit. O that this morning at his holy table, I may know the things that are freely given unto us of God. He invites me to come, he has provided a rich repast. O blessed Saviour! condescend to meet me at thine own table, and save me from the fiery darts of the wicked one.

After coming from the Lord's Table.

"Now I am thine, forever thine,
Nor shall my purpose move;
Thy hands have losed my bonds of pain,
And bound me with thy love."

Thy vows are upon me, O God! I have solemnly engaged to be thine. I have been enabled, I trust, to give myself away to my Saviour, at his own table, with that measure of faith he was pleased to bestow. I viewed in him all that my necessities required, and all that my soul could desire. That in comparison with his love, the world could present no object that could allure my heart. I felt that in his strength, I could go forward to all duties and trials, with a humble boldness. That even the fiery darts of the wicked one should miss their aim, shielded by his almighty arm. But ah! in my own breast, there still lurk many enemies to my Redeemer; still am I encumbered with a body of sin and death, that I fear will draw me from him and wound my peace. Be it then deeply impressed upon my soul, that I every moment need supplies of his grace; that I must keep near to him and continually seek his presence.

God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which may the world be crucified unto me, and I unto the world. As I have this day professed to be his dis-

ciple, may I be enabled to walk even as he walked. May I put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and be found continually, either in communion with him, or seeking to glorify him in the world. May love to God and man possess my whole soul. May I have something of the love and zeal, the self-denial, benevolence, meekness, patience and fortitude of the divine Saviour.

No. III.—*On a birth day.*

This day completes another year of my life. It has been passed in those peaceful scenes, where some of the happiest hours of my existence have been spent. Where first I was enabled to love my God, and where my heart has often felt the sweet influence of divine grace. My soul would now offer up its tribute of gratitude to my heavenly Father, for all his goodness; for his protecting, directing and supporting care; for the influences of his blessed Spirit; and sweetly, and entirely, again commit itself to his disposing will; sincerely desiring to live to his praise, and to rely upon the mercy and grace of the Lord Jesus to eternal life.

No. IV.—*On witnessing the dedication of a church in Philadelphia.*

Interesting have been the employments and exercises of this morning. May the high and holy One, who inhabiteth eternity, who condescends to regard the affairs of his creatures, and especially who presides over the interests of Zion, be pleased to hear the prayer of his people this day, in behalf of that sacred edifice dedicated to his service. There may he record his name: there may the Redeemer become precious to thousands of immortal souls: there may the blessed Spirit be poured out, and his enlightening, sanctifying, and comforting influences be dispensed abroad. Long, long may it stand, as a monument of praise to God. Blessed be his name, that he hath not left himself without a witness amongst us, and that the foundation of his church remaineth steadfast and immoveable. Blessed Redeemer! we would view the erection of this building as a token for good. Long have thy servants laboured and prayed for it, and now thou hast permitted them to see it completed, and this day, to behold it crowded with serious and attentive worshippers. O that yet thou wouldst grant them the desire of their heart, to see thy power and glory displayed, in bringing many souls to the foot of the cross. This

indeed would be the glory of the house. Blessed, blessed God! our hope is in thee, all our expectations are from thee. Let not thy people cease daily to supplicate for this unspeakable blessing. Clothe thy priests with salvation, and let all thy saints rejoice in thy goodness, and in the increase and extension of thy kingdom. O hasten the day, when Jerusalem shall be a praise in the whole earth. Lord it shall arrive, thou wilt be glorified.

Solemn and delightful, I repeat it, have been the exercises of this day. My soul hath magnified and adored the great and glorious God. It hath poured forth its prayer into his bosom for the welfare of Zion. It hath tasted of the pure milk of the word. The glory of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ hath beamed upon it. O that I could more frequently, more distinctly behold it! Lord, I beseech thee, show me thy glory, and may my soul be transformed into thine image by the view.

April 7, 1804.

[*To be continued.*]

FRAGMENTS.

"It was expected that the extraction of Christ should be very great and noble, he was to be the son of David, of a family that had *a name like to the names of the great men that are in the earth.* 2 Sam. vii. 9. But he sprang out of this royal and illustrious family when it was reduced and sunk; and Joseph, that son of David who was his supposed father, was but a poor carpenter, perhaps a SHIP-CARPENTER, for most of his relations were fishermen."

Henry on Is. 53.

How unlike is the christian world to the christian doctrine! The seal is fair and excellent, but the impression languid or invisible!

"*Nor the clouds return after the rain,*" Eccles. xii. 2.

In young persons, to clouds and showers of affliction, the fine weather of health usually succeeds, but with the aged, one dark sky has scarce exhausted its contents before another begins to gather.

Zoroaster taught that the soul had wings; that having broken these wings, she fell headlong into the body; and that recovering again the plumes she had lost, she flies up to heaven her original habitation.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

Session of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, in the city of Philadelphia, May 27th, 1808, the following Resolution and Address were adopted.

Attest, JOHN E. LATTA, *Permanent Clerk.*

"WHEREAS it is the duty of all christian churches, families and people of every description, either suffering under the adverse dispensations of divine providence, or being threatened with them, to humble themselves before Almighty God, and to implore his mercy and protection: And whereas our country appears to be threatened with great calamities: Resolved, therefore, that it be recommended, and it is hereby earnestly recommended to the churches under the care of this Assembly, to set apart the second Thursday of September next, as a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer, to beseech the Ruler of the universe, that for Christ's sake he would be pleased to avert the calamities with which we are now threatened; and that he would restore harmony to the contending nations of the world. That he would pour out his Spirit on our churches more generally and abundantly; bless the efforts that are making to christianize the heathen, and to extend the blessings of the gospel to the destitute inhabitants of our land.

"Who can tell if God will turn and repent! and turn away from his fierce anger? Who can tell whether he who holds the destinies of men in his hands, and who turns the hearts of the rulers of the earth as the rivers of water are turned, will hear the supplications of his people? Let us then humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God. Let us turn every one from his evil ways, and from the wickedness of his hands.

"To the great head of the church let us raise our united hearts and voices, for his choicest blessings on our country and the world at large. Soon may the heathen be given him for an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession! Soon may the descendents of faithful Abraham be brought to the fold of our common Lord, that there may be one sheepfold and one shepherd."

A Letter from the Rev. Mr. Morrison, Missionary in China, to Mr. Ralston.

Quang Tung, Dec. 30, 1807.

DEAR SIR,

I forwarded to you, by favour of Mr. Latimer, a few lines, mentioning my safe arrival at Canton, and the reception I met

with. The Lord appeared for me, and opened a door with less difficulty than I, or my dear friends, anticipated. As I there mentioned, I have had some assistance from a native who is attached to the Romish Church, and who is, if I am rightly informed, their agent (*i. e.* of the missionaries) at this place. His name is Abel Yen Pwoin Ming. I have nothing to apprehend from Abel. But the Portuguese clergy at Macao have become alarmed, and have, in the opinion of several of the gentlemen here, written up to Pekin ere this time, respecting me; so that if the missionaries there have influence enough, the probability is, that they will obtain an order for my removal from the empire. I am not, however distressed about the future, "the Lord will provide." If obliged to leave [this place], I purpose to seek a residence on the island of Penang, amongst the thousands of Chinese who are there.

My opportunities of learning the language are full as many, or more than I expected to enjoy.

I continue with Mr. Milner, to whom you favoured me with a letter of introduction. I shall, however, in the course of two or three days' time, begin to board myself in a plainer way than in the family, on account of the very heavy expense of a residence in this country.

The object before us, dear sir, in this attempt, is very great and important. Three hundred millions of men, at the lapse of eighteen centuries, are without the book of God in their native tongue; and these three hundred millions speaking the same language.

I saw, a few mornings ago, a French missionary, Mons. de le Bissachre, who is lately from Tonquin. He has resided in that country eighteen years, during which time he says there have been three persecutions of the christians, the number of whom he estimates to be 260,000.*

Mons. Richiney, who, two years ago, was ordered to leave the empire of China, has now obtained permission to remain in Canton as "procureur" to the missionaries at Pekin. It is said, I don't know with what truth, that some persons in the character of missionaries are expected out from France.

Sometimes pray for me, my dear sir, and permit me to say that I am, with christian regard, your's in the faith of our Lord Jesus.

ROBERT MORRISON.

* There is reason, however, to apprehend the account is beyond the real truth.

The trustees of the Western Missionary Society report, to the Standing Committee of Missions,

THAT, in some respects, the Indian Mission at Sandusky is in a better situation than was stated in their report last year; in other respects nearly the same. In the course of the last year, some pressing difficulties have arisen to exercise the faith and patience of all concerned in it; and many well timed interpositions of divine providence have encouraged their hopes, and led them forward in promoting the original design of the society. In September the board was informed that, in consequence of the sickness of one of the hands at Sandusky and the unsuitableness of one of their plough horses, another hand with a good horse was wanted. When the board met to inquire what could be done in that emergency, and was discouraged by the insufficiency of their funds to meet the expense, information was privately handed to them that a man in the vicinity had a good horse, which he had previously determined to sell, and to give the whole of his price for the support of the mission; but having been disappointed in his attempts to sell him, he now desired to know whether the board could accept him instead of his price, and use him on the farm at Sandusky. On examination he was found well calculated to answer the purpose of the mission. Such appropriate help in the time of need taught every heart to trust and not be afraid, and the difficulty was surmounted.

The sickness of the men employed as labourers, greatly retarded their progress in every branch of their business, gave a gloomy aspect to the whole concern, and subjected the society to additional expenses. The suffering to which they have been subjected by fevers, agues, and their attendant debility, cannot easily be conceived. But latterly they have been blessed with health.

The dwelling house and school room are finished. The farm has been enlarged. The stock thrive and increase, beyond our most sanguine expectations. The prospect of raising provisions on the farm, sufficient for the largest demand contemplated, is flattering.

A few children attended the school, part of the summer, but not steadily. The pagan devotees, called prophets, had revived the worship of *their* god with great zeal, on their return to the towns in the spring; and employed all their influence to prevent

the women from putting their children under Mr. Badger's care. In this they were successful in some instances. The children being at the mother's disposal, her superstition can prevent the father from sending them to a school, where she apprehends they will incur their Maker's displeasure, by learning the customs of white men. Some evil minded traders assisted the enemy in this part of his work. In July, the chiefs and warriors in council got the prophet's religion disgraced, the prophet silenced, or at least checked, and entered into a new resolution to countenance and adhere to their father Mr. Badger. The school received the next shock from the agitation of the Indians' minds, occasioned by the apprehension of war between the United States and England. Until the result of the councils of the different tribes on that subject was known, suspense and confusion prevailed, and prevented steady attention to any business. The children could not be collected or kept together for the purpose of learning. But notwithstanding all these embarrassments, the board have the happiness to be assured that the school would have succeeded in the fall, according to the wish of the society, if Mr. Badger's health had not failed.

He came to Pittsburg in October to attend the synod, and to remove his family to Sandusky. A violent attack of the bilious fever confined him in the vicinity of Pittsburg six weeks. This painful dispensation prevented his return to Sandusky, until the 6th of December. During this interval the Indians got ready to remove from the towns to their hunting camps. But having resolved to leave their children with Mr. Badger, they waited two weeks for his return; when hearing of his sickness they reluctantly took them to the woods. Though Mr. Badger has not had all the children under his tuition through the winter, yet the board do not consider any part of their labour as lost, nor their prospects blasted by this delay. They would stand ready to do what their hand finds to be done, and trust that the Lord, whose hand has deferred the desirable event a few months, will choose the time to crown the work with complete success.

The opposition of some of the Canadian traders has greatly increased the difficulty of conducting the mission, from its commencement. When their efforts to alienate the minds of the Indians failed, they next ventured to exhibit false and slanderous charges against Mr. Badger before the governor. To meet and

to repel this diabolical attack occasioned him much trouble. But under divine protection he was brought through it, without injury to himself or the cause. The authors of the prosecution, finding a spirit in him that would not be driven from his station by accusations, unsupported by proof, dropped it, and refused to appear against him. In what form their next opposition will appear cannot be foreseen. Yet it is a rational apprehension that they will be thorns in the sides of all missionaries who will ever labour among the North Western tribes. But when the Wyandots shall be brought into the church of Christ, and made heirs of salvation, these sorrows will be remembered no more, for joy that a nation is born unto the Lord.

The mission has suffered through the want of a permanent interpreter; the funds of the society not being adequate to the expense of keeping a good one in constant employ. The unfriendly offices of the prophets and traders would be counteracted at once by a faithful and well qualified interpreter, attached to the mission, and always at hand to make a fair statement of the truth. Suspicions, excited in their cautious minds by false suggestions, would vanish; objections, arising out of ignorance or superstition, would be answered; and sermons and religious instruction would be more accurately and clearly communicated. The board has a reputable and influential interpreter in view, and, if through divine mercy they shall be enabled to obtain him, will then rejoice to see in operation, all the means that are known to be necessary for attaining the great end of their labour; and will hope that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ will make them effectual. The only obstacle in the way is the expense. Interpreters among savages occupy the same place that the learned do in civilized society. Of course their services are estimated at a very high rate. Four hundred dollars per annum will be required by the person in view. His wife is a serious woman; can read and interpret well. His children, by speaking both languages, will be of very great service in the school.

The principal end of the society in sending missionaries to Sandusky, is the religious instruction of the perishing heathen who are wandering through that dark region. They have not lost sight of this object for a moment. The school, the agricultural and mechanical pursuits introduced among them are accounted no more than handmaids to religion. Though in themselves

blessings to the Indians, yet they hold only a secondary rank; as they are helps to remove obstacles, and prepare the way for pouring the precious light of evangelical truth on their minds, that they may be led into the paths of holiness. Through divine aid the gospel of Christ has been statedly preached at Sandusky since the commencement of the mission, except the time of Mr. Badger's sickness last fall and a few necessary journies, and has generally been well attended by the Wyandots, and interpreted to them in their own tongue. The fruit of this labour proves that it has not been in vain. The Wyandot man, mentioned in the report of last year as a hopeful convert, still manifests the evidences of increasing piety. He frequently prays in the Wyandot language, immediately after sermon; at which times a deep solemnity and silent weeping often prevail through the whole assembly. He regularly worships God in his family, morning and evening. A number of the Indians frequently come to his house at the hours of family worship, to join with him in prayer, and seem to have a relish for the sacred exercise, though they have not yet begun to imitate his practice at home.

Besides this man, there are three or four of the black people hopefully pious. They reside in a small village near the upper town. Particular attention has been paid to their religious instruction, by all the missionaries who have visited the Wyandots. The missionaries and the society have furnished them with a bible and some other books. They spend every sabbath together in prayer and religious conference. A white man who resides among them reads to them. All secular business is entirely suspended during the sabbath. A number of the Wyandots frequent these prayer meetings on the sabbath. One of them, who is intimate with the black people, has lately appeared to have his conscience awakened. The latest accounts state that their serious attention to religion was increasing. They are desirous to be baptized and admitted to communion. There is also ground of hope concerning the piety of a Wyandot woman. Some others, in a measure convinced of the insufficiency of their own religious rites, appear seriously concerned about their salvation.

We have learned from respectable authority, that in a Wyandot hunting camp on the heads of Scioto last winter, after the hunters came in at night, the whole camp collected together at one fire, and with decent solemnity joined in prayer,

before they went to rest; and early in the morning, before any of them dispersed from the fires, they again collected and prayed together. From the manner these solemn meetings were conducted, the observer was impressed with the belief that it was their daily practice.

We are also informed that the Wyandots, when they come into the settlements, are easily distinguished from other Indians by their good behaviour, and general attention to the sabbath. That this acknowledged superiority of the Wyandots has arisen out of the superior advantages of religious instruction which they have enjoyed, formerly by a French priest residing among them, and latterly by the labours of our missionaries, cannot rationally be denied.

On the first of November, the board were enabled to discharge all the expenses of the mission, and to advance $227 98. The debts contracted since that time are chiefly unpaid.

On the whole the trustees are constrained still to say, that hitherto the Lord has helped them. And if, in the providence of God, they shall be furnished with the means of employing the interpreter in view, they will feel encouraged to pursue the proposed plan, hoping that the time is at hand, when the hitherto benighted tribes of Wyandots are to receive the blessings of learning and religion, and a church be planted for the Lord at Sandusky.

Signed by order of the board,

JOHN ANDERSON, Sec. pro tem.

May 2, 1808.

A Narrative of the STATE OF RELIGION, within the bounds of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, in the United States, for the year 1808. Read in the First Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, May 25th.

THE General Assembly acknowledge with ardent gratitude the distinguished benignity of God to the churches within their bounds during the year past. He hath truly done great things for us; building up the waste places of Zion, and adding unto the number of such as shall be saved. From every quarter, with but few exceptions, we hear of harmony among our ministers, order among our congregations, an increased attention to the ordinances of the gospel, and the progressing triumphs of that grace by

which alone sinners can be reconciled to God. In many places, especially within the bounds of the synod of New-York and New-Jersey, times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord are experienced. The Spirit has been poured out on considerable portions of country, and fruits of righteousness have appeared, honourable to the kingdom of Christ, and inviting to the world which lieth in wickedness. Unhallowed combinations have been broken up; enemies to the cross have been confounded, and in many instances made the subjects of divine grace.

It is observable that the work, though powerful, has progressed with great silence, uncommon solemnity, and free from all appearance of extravagance.

The revivals have been preceded in every instance by a union of prayer among christians, to which they have felt constrained by the fervent desire of their hearts that Christ might be glorified, and by deep and solemn impressions of the value of precious and immortal souls. Believing parents, more especially, have been influenced to wrestle with God in behalf of their children. We record with peculiar emotions of delight, for the encouragement of the godly, that, as in all ages past, so still, our God is a hearer of prayer. He has come down from his high and holy place, and granted the requests of his people. The consequences have been that the assemblies of the saints were crowded with inquiring sinners. Many meetings for prayer and praise have been established. It appears that, in several places, a number of persons have adopted the plan of assembling together on the sabbath morning, immediately before public worship, and spending some time in religious exercises, particularly in prayer for the divine presence and blessing in the public institutions of his worship. This, if properly managed, may prove a happy preparative for the worship of the sanctuary. We would, however, earnestly caution all who are under our care, against suffering public duties to interfere with the duties of the family and the closet.

Among the visible fruits of an increased attention to the gospel we recognise the establishment of benevolent institutions, as peculiarly characteristic of the religion of Jesus.—We mean associations for the relief of destitute widows and orphans, for the instruction of the ignorant in divine knowledge, and for the benefit of the poor generally. It is a distinguished excellence of

the gospel of Christ, that it is suited to the poor; not merely to their afflicted condition, but to their intellectual acquirements. Christians can give no better evidence of their sincere attachment to the Lord who bought them, than by manifesting love, not only to their brethren in Christ, but to mankind in general. The fruits of benevolence ought ever to accompany the profession of piety; and it is exclusively the glory of christianity that it has produced every where, as far as its influence extends, effective plans to meliorate the condition of the poor. We hope our brethren, in all our churches, will more fully testify, in this particular, the power of the grace of God.

In the southern parts of our bounds, the extraordinary revivals of religion have considerably declined: bodily agitations are gradually disappearing: in one instance, where extravagance and wild enthusiasm had been avowed and defended, in opposition to the pastoral advice of this body, we are happy to learn that the abetters have acknowledged their error, and returned to the good order of our church.

Those who have been the subjects of the revival persevere in the ways of godliness, with but few exceptions. Apostasies are rare. Accessions to the communion are made on every occasion, though not in such numbers as formerly. Believers are still on the watch; disposed to pray, and actually praying for the spread of the gospel, and the triumphs of grace over all opposition.

In those districts of country, as well as in some others, the want of gospel ministers is severely felt. People are suffering for lack of instruction, and calling for help; but help, adequate to their necessities, cannot be obtained. The assembly regret, that so few, comparatively, offer themselves as candidates for the holy ministry; and they hope that the attention of the churches under their care will be directed to this important subject, that by their united exertions, some effectual plan for statedly supplying the wants of Zion may be formed.

With such abundant cause of gratitude is connected cause of sorrow and humiliation. We have observed with pain that, in some presbyteries, the duties of family religion, and of catechetical instruction, are neglected. Truly it is shameful in men who call themselves by the name of Christ, not to honour him before their families, by worshipping him statedly. Every head of a family is responsible for all its members to God and his country.

How can he expect to fulfil his duty, if he does not pray for and with them, and instruct them from the word of God? If *he* does not honour God, it cannot be expected *his family* will. And a christian family, living without family religion, is a contradiction. It argues on the part of such professors an awful declension and a criminal dereliction of duty.

In many places, also, we have heard of lukewarmness and inattention to the great concerns of religion; of the profanation of the sabbath by thoughtless sinners, and of decline in the life of godliness. How lamentable, that with the light of the gospel shining around us, any should walk in darkness, and despise the goodness of God!

From our sister churches in Connecticut and Vermont, we learn with pleasure that revivals prevail there also; that religion flourishes; that among other instances of mercy, Yale college is graciously visited; and that believers are walking in the comforts of the Holy Ghost.

On a review of the state of religion in the churches referred to above, we rejoice in saying that it has progressed in the last year, and that it is still progressing. This revives us in our pilgrimage, and causes us to look forward with pleasing expectations. The Redeemer will ultimately reign throughout the earth. "His name shall endure forever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun, and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed."

We only add, "Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things; and blessed be his glorious name, forever; and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and Amen."

A society has been lately established at New-Castle, Delaware, for the suppression of vice and immorality. The following serious and affectionate address was lately delivered to the citizens of that place by a member of the society.

Sin is the reproach, and if persevered in, will be the destruction of any people.

Fellow Citizens,

In proportion to the prevalence of vice and immorality in any place, its inhabitants are in danger of temporal calamity and eter-

nal destruction. Vice, in its own nature, leads to shame, disgrace and misery. It debases the mind, takes off the restraints of conscience, weakens the obligations to social and relative duties, and opens the way for fraud, oppression and every species of violence. It is peculiarly dangerous on account of its diffusive and insinuating qualities. Like leaven it soon, if not suppressed, leaveneth the whole lump, spreads itself through the whole mass of society, and endangers every thing that ought to be dear to man. Every friend then to social order and happiness ought to be an enemy to vice; and should engage with heart and hand to suppress it.

It is not only dangerous on account of its own baneful nature and tendency; but peculiarly so, because it provoketh the anger of God, and brings down upon man the vengeance of heaven. God is angry with the wicked every day, and frequently executes upon them, even in this world, singular judgments.

Now the only effectual barrier against vice and immorality, is religion and its institutions. When, therefore, the most important religious institutions are disregarded, contemned, and violated, there is the greatest cause for the most serious alarm. The barrier being removed, the flood comes in irresistibly, and we are swept not only to temporal but eternal destruction.

We would observe, then, that the sabbath has always been considered the great palladium, the grand safe-guard of morality, piety and religion. By enjoining upon them the observance of the sabbath, God distinguished the Jews from the heathen. And to prove that it was one of the most important of divine institutions, God frequently promised them very great blessings if they revered it, and as often denounced the most awful judgments if they violated it. Out of a great number we will select a few of the promises. "Blessed is the man that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it. If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day, and call the sabbath a delight, then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord, and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob. And it shall come to pass, if ye diligently hearken unto me, saith the Lord, to bring in no burden through the gates of this city on the sabbath day, but hallow the sabbath day, to do no work therein; then shall there enter into the gates of this city, kings and princes sitting on the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they and their princes, the men of

Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and this city shall remain forever." These are great and glorious promises both of temporal and eternal blessings. Hear now the threatenings denounced against the violation of the sabbath. Here too we shall make a very small selection.

"Ye shall keep the sabbath; every one that defileth it, shall surely be put to death. Whosoever doth any work on the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death." And it was not only threatened against a man that was found gathering sticks on the sabbath day, that he should be put to death; but by the direction of the Lord to Moses he was actually stoned to death by the congregation of Israel. And in the prophecy of Jeremiah, we read, "But if ye will not hearken unto me, to hallow the sabbath day and not to bear a burden, even entering in at the gates of Jerusalem on the sabbath day; then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem and it shall not be quenched." And this was literally and awfully fulfilled at the final destruction of Jerusalem. Notwithstanding the utmost exertions of the emperor Titus to save some of the most elegant buildings, and especially the temple, it was all reduced to ashes. And Nehemiah represents that the violation of the sabbath had been the cause of a former destruction of Jerusalem, and of the Jews being carried into a long, disgraceful and severe captivity. "Then," saith he, "I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, what evil thing is this that you do, and profane the sabbath day? Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us and upon this city? yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning his sabbath."

From these promises and threatenings we infer, not only that the violation of the sabbath is a great crime and will certainly be severely punished, but also, that wherever it prevails, every other vice is let loose, and the people's iniquities become full, and call down upon them the just and awful vengeance of heaven. This is farther proved too by the history of the Jews, and of every other nation where the sabbath is known. The sabbath being appointed immediately by God, and the observance of it being peculiarly well calculated to make and cultivate deep impressions of God and divine things, and of the evil nature and dangerous consequences of sin, it is certainly to be expected, that, when men are hardened enough to disregard it, and when such a strong barrier

against vice is taken away, iniquity will come in like a flood. That this has always been the case, and that the wrath of God in consequence hath been poured out, history unequivocally attests.

When, therefore, we see the sacred institution of the sabbath generally violated and contemned, we have the greatest reason for the most serious alarm. Julian the apostate and most bitter enemy of christianity did all he could to destroy it. He was of opinion and justly too, that if he succeeded in this, he secured success in the destruction of the christian religion. The matter then comes to this point, Are we willing that christianity should be banished from us, and that heathenism and worse than it, should be introduced? How was it, a few years ago, with a certain European nation? They for a while banished, as far as they could, the observance of the sabbath, and consequently christianity. What was the consequence? Read the history and shudder. Universal confusion, massacre and bloodshed immediately ensued. All ranks and sexes were dragged to the scaffold, and crimsoned it with their blood. Many previously had congratulated themselves upon the happy effects, as they supposed, of the introduction of what they called philosophy, another name for irreligion and deism; but they became themselves the melancholy victims.

We who are advocates for the observance of the sabbath, and the suppression of vice and immorality, are considered by many, the greatest enemies to what they call the best interests of this vicinity. But let our opponents prevail; and behold the consequence! a curse temporal and eternal upon you and your posterity. Be assured we have your best interests in view, both for this and a future world. "Godliness has the promise of the life "that now is, and that which is to come." What selfish or earthly interest, as they calculate interest, can we have in view! Nay on the contrary, we expose ourselves to scoff and derision, to threats of pecuniary injury, and, if they dare, to personal abuse and persecution. These things, however, we regard not, if we promote the good of man and the interest of religion. "If God be for us, none can be against us."

Even the deist must admit that God governs the world, and surely none should, none can expect to prosper, in the direct violation of his institutions. It should be duly considered, that we are transacting not only for ourselves, but for our children. Ve-

terans may be able to withstand the enemy and conquer, whilst the raw and unexperienced would soon be foiled and worsted. If the young see vice and irreligion generally prevail, they will become familiar with them, and at length consider them innocent, and be carried away with the destructive torrent. The beginning of vice is like the letting out of water. At first it may be easily stopped; but, if permitted to continue, it irresistibly inundates every thing in its way. If vice and immorality, then, were only beginning to prevail amongst us, it is high time for us to be at our posts. If our children see the sabbath habitually and with impunity violated, they will grow up in irreverence for it, and consequently in heathenism; for we have before proved, that there is no christianity without the observance of the sabbath. Every man, then, who consents to the violation of it, consents to the destruction of religion, and to the prevalence of vice of every description; and who ever wilfully and habitually violates it himself, lifts his hand and strikes as heavy a blow as he can for the same fatal purposes.

Were we attempting to prevent the propagation of a severe and mortal disease, or to appease the anger of a powerful prince, or to exclude the devouring beasts of the forest, we should be highly commended, and have many, doubtless, to unite with us. Our objects are much more important. We are endeavouring to prevent the extension of sin, which threatens not only the body with temporal, but soul and body with eternal, death. We wish to put a stop to the devastations of the monster vice, and the roaring lion which is going about seeking whom he may devour, and to ward off the vengeance of God, the King of kings and Lord of lords; "he has bent his bow, and made it ready, he hath prepared for him the instruments of death." You perhaps may see none of these evils threatening you. Your not seeing them however makes them no less certain. The bird on the tree is never more insensible of danger, than when the piece of the fowler is levelled for its destruction; yet its danger is no less for its not seeing it: nay, it is increased, for if it had known, it might have made its escape. But we see your danger, and if we did not warn you of it and endeavour to rescue you from it, we would be monsters in society.

Were Babylon and Nineveh destroyed? Were Sodom and Gomorrah consumed with fire and brimstone from heaven? It was

because vice and immorality prevailed to a great degree and provoked the Almighty. Did the Jews suffer pestilence and famine? Did the heavens become brass over their heads and the earth iron under their feet? Were they frequently carried away into disgraceful and severe captivity? Was Jerusalem, their glory and their boast, at length totally destroyed? Were its walls and its superb temple razed to the foundation? Did it exhibit no spectacle within but massacre and death, and none without, but gibbets and crosses, and thousands of victims expiring on them in groans and shrieks and cries and blood? All these things befel the Jews, on account of their violation of God's laws, and especially of the sabbath; on account of their abuse of their peculiar privileges; their irreligion, impenitence and infidelity.

We, as a town, have for some time past been highly favoured and have greatly prospered. Within a few years we have risen from the lowest insignificance to a considerable degree of wealth and respectability. Pestilence, though raging in many contiguous towns and cities, has not visited us; and the destructive element of fire, though elsewhere often spreading devastation, has not come near us, to injure us. We have enjoyed many important temporal and spiritual blessings. Do we not then owe much gratitude to heaven? Is it not the Lord, who hath thus prospered us? But what returns have we made? Have we duly appreciated and improved our privileges? Do we reverence God's ordinances and hallow his sabbaths? Are vice, irreligion and infidelity ashamed to show their heads amongst us? or do they greatly abound and triumph, and are the sacred name and holy day of the Lord almost universally profaned? If the latter be the fact, our situation is truly dangerous and awful. "It will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than it will be for us. Thou Capernaum, who hast been exalted to heaven shalt be sunk down to hell." This threatening is denounced against us, "if ye will not hearken unto me, saith the Lord, to hallow the sabbath day, and not to bear a burden on the sabbath day; then will I kindle a fire in thy gates, and it shall not be quenched."

Is it not then high time for us, as citizens, to awake out of our sleep and to open our eyes! Do we see the clouds thickening, the tempest blackening; and the lightnings beginning to flash? Be assured, evil times are coming, times fraught with direful calamity and distress, destruction and death. We then earnestly

invite and conjure all friends to morality, virtue and piety to rally round our standard. Christians, come forth boldly and quit yourselves like men. Does the enemy come in like a flood, set your faces like a flint against him. Let us like Jonah preach repentance to Nineveh, if peradventure she may repent, and yet for a while be saved from the vengeance of heaven. Or, like righteous Lot in Sodom, let us make a bold stand against vice and irreligion; and if, after our united and zealous endeavours, we cannot succeed, if the wicked will not hear nor forbear, they must be left to perish in their sins, and their accumulated guilt must fall on their own heads.

To conclude, we earnestly warn all the licentious and profane, and especially the habitual and notorious violators of the sabbath, to break off their sins by repentance, and to turn unto the Lord that he may have mercy upon you, and unto our God that he may abundantly pardon you. Flee for mercy before it be forever hid from your eyes. We warn you by the terrors of the laws of both God and man. We warn you by the terrors of the civil authority, if it has any, or if it is weak and pusillanimous, we conjure you by the vengeance of God. "His arm is not shortened that it cannot save;" neither is it shortened that it cannot destroy. "He will by no means clear the guilty, and he is a consuming fire to the wicked." Though you may escape the penalty of human, you cannot escape the penalty of the divine laws. Though the law of man may not reach you for the violation, the law of God will punish you for violating his sabbaths. What does it profit a criminal to escape for a while, if his punishment be severe in proportion to its delay. Be assured the time is fast coming when you will throw to the moles and to the bats all the unjust gains, which you have made by breaking the laws of God or of man. Death stands at the door and knocks. With its summons in your hands would you dare to profane the holy name or day of the Lord. How soon this may be the case God only knows. Keep death and hell, judgment and eternity always before you, and dare not to sin.

Finally, we conjure every person to break off his sins by repentance, and so to live and fulfil his duty in the station in which he is placed, as he would wish he had done; nay, would give ten thousand worlds that he had done, when he comes to die, when he appears at the bar of God.

MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

[*Concluded from page* 198.]

ROME.

POPERY has often been termed 'The Incurable Abomination:' it is a mass of error and superstition, which will never be destroyed but by 'the breath of Christ's mouth and the brightness of his appearing.' The French national catechism, translated by Mr. Bogue, clearly shows that all the ancient errors of the church of Rome are still retained; and the following account of a ceremony in that city, will show that the most absurd mummeries of the system continue to be observed:

On Trinity Sunday (1807), the canonization of five blessed inhabitants of heaven took place, viz. Francis Caracciolo, Benedict de San-Traledo, Angele Mereci, Colette Boilet, and Jacintha Marescotti. The pope was met at the gate of the church by the chapter of the Vatican, and conducted to the altar, where the holy sacrament was exposed: he was then placed again in his chair, and carried into the grand theatre, erected for this august ceremony. Here he ascended a magnificent throne, and received the homage of the cardinals, &c. The solicitor for the canonization then advanced towards the throne, where the advocate, kneeling, made his request for the canonization of these five blessed celestials. The archbishop of Carthage answered, in the name of his holiness, that it was his intention, first, to implore the assistance of divine light, through the intercession of the saints. The head of the church and the whole assembly then knelt, and the litanies of the saints were sung. The advocate then made a second request, and recourse was again had to fresh prayers. The request was repeated a third time, in these words, *Instanter, instantius, instantissime*. The archbishop answered, "His holiness decides, that it is agreeable to God, that the five blessed souls should be ranked among the saints.' The pope then pronounced the decree of canonization on the persons first mentioned. After which the cardinal-solicitor kissed the hand and the knees of the holy father, who began the *Te Deum*. Suddenly resounded the trumpets, the bells of the church, the discharge of field-pieces, and of the artillery of the castle of St. Angelo. This signal being given, the bells of all the churches in Rome rent the air during a whole hour.

Among several other ceremonies, too tedious to recite, prayers were offered to the saints, which they had just made; and his holiness delivered a learned discourse. The cardinal-bishop then requested, and published a plenary indulgence for seven years, and seven times forty days, for those who had assisted on this occasion, and those who have visited the tombs of these new saints!

The public papers state, that the castle of St. Angelo, which commands the city of Rome, has been taken possession of by the French troops; and that it is probable the temporal authority of the pope is nearly at an end. It is even said, that a new kingdom, including the papal territories, is to be established, under the name of *Latium*, and given to a brother of Napoleon.

FRENCH PRISONERS.

The religion of our divine Master teaches us to love our enemies. On this principle the directors of the Missionary Society have acted towards the French prisoners now in England. Dr. Doddridge's admirable book, The Rise and Progress of Religion, in the French language (somewhat abridged) has been neatly printed at the expense of the Society; and nearly 3,000 copies have been distributed among the French prisoners, confined in various parts of this country.

FRANCE.

An Extract from the Belgian Traveller.

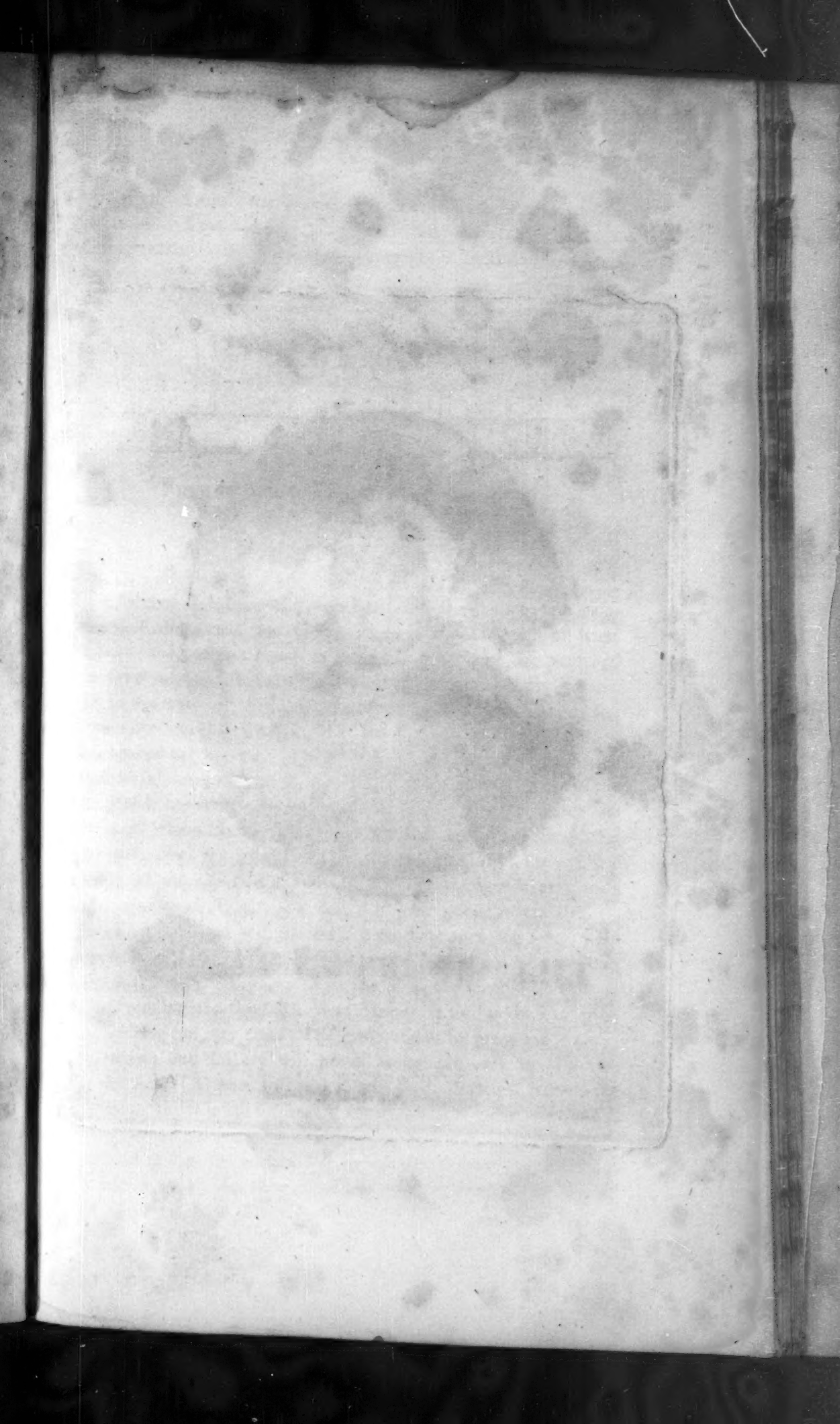
From what I have heard and seen during my present journey, I am more than ever convinced that the *ecrasons l'Infame* of Voltaire, has never ceased to be the order of the day among his sectaries; and that christianity in France approaches every day nearer to its extinction. Bonaparte and Talleyrand are too politic to knock on the head, at once, a religion of 18 centuries; but the degradation of christianity in the person of its ostensible chief, has produced the same revolution in religious sentiments as the humiliation and murder of the head of the kingdom of France had already done in political ones; and most Frenchmen are therefore religious, as well as political, freethinkers: but, if I am not misinformed, Talleyrand said, even when the pope still fraternized with Bonaparte in the Thuilleries, 'Christianity in France will descend into the tomb, without giving either alarm or making any

noise, because the present generation of the French clergy will leave no posterity behind them; their faith is buried with them; and no resurrection of either is to be apprehended by the friends of philosophy.' Indeed, when one remembers that all the present French priests must be now either old, or above the middle age, as since 1790 hardly any young Frenchmen have entered into orders, it is not improbable that, within 20 or 30 years, the present altars of Christ here will be deserted for want of servants to officiate.'

Extract of a letter from a chaplain in the navy, who is abroad, to his friend in England.

I AM still decidedly of opinion, that the word of God continues in the ship. We have had between 30 and 40 under convictions; but, alas! several have drawn back. Some of the lapsed have returned to us; and our evening meetings are pretty well attended. Several pray very well; and in case of my absence, which, however, rarely occurs, they conduct the worship at night, *i. e.* they read a hymn and a sermon, and pray.

In a gale of wind some time ago, I heard a man talking in a strange way about religion; which arrested my attention. He seemed to have determined against it, and to have collected a good many plausible arguments; but I could see he was unhappy. He was about 44 years old, and an uncommonly clever man. I was very ill; but I took him, against his will, to my cabin; and I talked to him about the love of Christ to the chief of sinners, till he told me his story. It was black and sad indeed! He wept like a child, though he was reckoned one of the most determined blackguards in the ship, and one of the most resolute in wickedness. We often talked together: but, to cut the story short, he has ever since walked closely with God, and is very laborious in doing good. I am often suprized at his knowledge of the scriptures, and his judicious views of doctrines, &c. But who can teach like the Spirit of God?



The Evangelical Intelligencer.

I. H. LIVINGSTON. D.D. S.T.P.

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